

**Abstract.** *This article will focus on the importance of studying the identity aspects of managers in the idea that the identity potential of individuals determines their managerial potential and their managerial performance potential. I will describe the way the “Who Are You?” test has been applied (on a number of 184 Romanian subjects – high performance and low performance manager and non-managers) and the results of this test. The mentioned test is the most known sociological research tool in studying identity. This test has not been applied previously to Romanian managers, moreover socio-psychological researches having as subjects managers have not been conducted in Romania. The limit of the research is the non-probabilistic sampling (but the research results may be used as hypotheses for extended studies). The conclusion reached is that there are differences between the manager’s self-identification and non-managers’ self-identification, between the high performance manager’s self-identification and the one of low performance managers; the article also suggests that the study of these differences can lead to the possibility of managerial diagnosis and prognosis.*

**Keywords:** managers, performance in management, self-identity, the WAY test, theoretical coding.

## **WHO ARE THE ROMANIAN MANAGERS AND HOW THEY IDENTIFY THEMSELVES?**

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## Introduction

The article brings into discussion the interest towards the knowledge of manager's identity and presents the results of applying on manager subjects of a very common test in the socio-humanistic sciences. I am speaking of the *WAY* test ("Who Are You?") which discloses the way the responders identify themselves. I have tried, therefore, to point out the way managers identify themselves in comparison with the non-managers, the way high responsibility-given managers identify themselves in comparison with less responsibility-given managers. The conduction of this test is just a part of a bigger project involved with the disclosing of identity characteristics proper to managers, in general, and high performance managers, in particular. Why is it relevant the identification of identity aspects proper to managers and high performance managers? Through my PhD project I have tried to show that one can become or not a manager and that one can become or not a high performance manager based on certain identity aspects that he/she has to possess.

The project out of which the conduction of the *WAY* test has been detached from refers to, as I have previously mentioned, studying the Romanian manager's identity. The initial hypothesis stated that the managerial potential and the performance potential in management depend on the identity potential of individuals. In order to test this hypothesis I have realized a qualitative research (biographical interviews of 20 managers that work in Brasov and a secondary analysis of other interviews with 25 national wide appreciated managers and entrepreneurs; the former interviews had been conducted by journalists from the "Money Express" Magazine) that has resulted in grounding of a theory regarding the identity conditionals of managerial work and managerial performance; and a quantitative research conducted on 207 Romanian subjects, managers and non-managers, to whom I have applied a questionnaire for a preliminary testing of the previously mentioned theory.

### 1. Studying managers and manager's identity

Socio-psychological researches having as subjects managers have not been conducted in Romania, or at least no results of such researches have been published (I am familiarized with prospective studies of entrepreneurial behaviour – conducted on individuals with no managerial jobs). There is no scientific information regarding the way the managers are in Romania; all we know is from the common level of knowledge. Moreover, given the great importance assigned to managers in whatever economy or society the study of what makes them perform at highest level and how one can increase their performance becomes, obviously, very important.

The sociologic interest in regard to management concentrates on four directions (according to Abercrombie, Hill and Turner, 2006, p. 227): "1. A concern with the managers as a social privileged group; 2. The character of social relations inside the hierarchies of companies; 3. Management, as a process with both technical and social functions; 4. Women's position in management". Within the first direction,

the bulk of studies related to managers are united under a single generalizing item: leadership.

There are studies within which leaders have been compared to non-leaders. For example Bass (1974/1990, p. 140) mentions the study of Peppers and Ryan in which 79 individuals that occupied leadership positions have been compared to 110 that did not occupy such positions, and has been discovered that leaders differed from non-leaders in three main aspects. "The first one: they see themselves more talkative, aggressive and intelligent, more concerned and more ambitious. The second one: they desire to become more sensitive, democratic and more correct, more involved, more creative and more self-confident. The third one: there is a better agreement between leaders' desires and their perceptions of themselves in contrast to those of the non-leaders". Otherwise, Covey (1992) counts the characteristics of good leaders, as they have emerged from its research: they always learn (they learn on a daily basis from their experience, they read, they look for trainings, they take courses, they listen to others, they are brave, they always ask questions, they always extend their field of competence, their abilities to do things, they develop new interests) and live a moderate life (they read magazines and good literature, they keep themselves updated with the latest businesses and events, they are socially active, they have a lot of friends and few confidants, they are intellectually and physically active, they have fun, they have a well developed sense of humour).

Yukl (1990, p. 10) inventories the study of different managerial themes as it has developed over years. "During the 1930s and 1940s, the research in managerial leadership concentrated mainly on characteristics and abilities. Hundreds of studies have been realized in order to determine which characteristics and features are associated with performance in management, but always, the results have been inconclusive". In the 1950s, the focus shifted towards managerial behaviour. "Social researchers started to observe the managers and collect descriptions of the managerial behaviour through interviews and questionnaires hoping to identify what leaders actually do instead of what they are". In the 1960s and 1970s studies have been realized to identify the specific managerial actions and there have been proposed classifications.

More recently, there have been realized widespread researches having as subjects, the managers. Bennis and Nanus in 1995, for example, have realized 90 interviews of high successful managers in the private and public sectors and have discovered that leaders stand apart through a high level of self-confidence in regard to their leading abilities and through a great dose of optimism in regard to the results of their activities. Also, Hofstede in 1980 realized a research of more than 50,000 managers from more than 40 countries, measuring the distance to power, the avoiding of uncertainties, the individualism/collectivism, and the masculinity/femininity.

Existing international studies – related to managers and their performance – have concentrated on the stocktaking of a manager's necessary abilities to become competitive and on the construction of training programs to their development. In general, the leading abilities have been more profoundly studied, and the majority of

these studies have barely reached the subject of self-identity and led the research of personal development into the stimulation of competences specific to management activities.

Therefore, across the years, identity enjoyed little attention from leadership specialized researchers. An increased interest in individual identity theories and in this field is noticed only after the 1990s. In 1999, Lord, Brown and Freiberg approach the subject of the self in the relation leader – subordinate; van Knippenberg and Hogg, in 2003 describe the role of identity processes in group and organizations reported to leadership and the exertion of power, while Luhrmann and Eberl (2007) analyze the moulding of identity in the interaction between leader and subordinate. The studies mentioned treat identity as a process and dwell on its construction at the working place, in the interaction between colleagues and subordinates.

Bass (1974/1990, pp. 150-162) shows that “the way they think, feel and action in regard to themselves affects the leading trend of people”. Levinson and Rosenthal (*apud* Bass) have discovered that the business leaders have strong self opinions and ideals. According to Bass, “the leaders, in contrast to the non-leaders, tend ‘to update’ their self. It is highly probable that they act at a maximum level of their capacities and that they develop in this direction”. Many studies back up the idea that “the higher the level occupied, the greater the satisfaction level at the working place”. “Managers get greater satisfaction at their job as they climb up the ladder of hierarchy. Less successful managers get lesser satisfaction out of their work and have less spare time for their family and relaxation”.

As a result of studies realized in an area of psychological interest, Zeleznik (1998, pp. 71-72) concludes: “managers prefer working with people; they avoid individual work as this makes them nervous” or that “they choose activities with other people (as the football/soccer team) and maintain a low level of emotional interference” or that “managers lack empathy or the ability to intuitively feel others’ feelings”.

There are also recent researches that try to apply qualitative methodology in the study of managers (*see* Down, 2006). The author, here, introduces us in the world of managers through a study whose result is the story of establishment of a business, of relations between its two owners, of the way they report themselves to the employees, and so on.

As well, there are interviews with managers on different hierarchical levels “focusing on their career and covering aspects as why did they do important job changes, the perception of self value or barriers in their careers” (Wajcman and Martin, 2002, p. 989). The mentioned researchers have discovered that there are no differences between female and male managers: they spend the same amount of time at work, they have worked for the same number of companies during their career, they have been promoted in management positions roughly around the same age and they consider work as an important pole in the construction of the self, and so on.

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Or there are the semi-structured interviews with leaders of big organizations (of more than 500 members) whose purpose is to identify the way leaders speak of them. It is about the use of certain linguistic techniques (French and Simpson, 2006).

Finally, there is a study proposing in-depth interviews of 20 Dutch managers belonging to different religious groups that inductively present their conceptualization of God, their principles and values as well as the way they run the business (Graafland, Kaptein and Mazareeuw – van der Duijn Schouten, 2007).

I have enumerated the studies realized along the time having as subjects the managers. As one can conclude, all of them refer to managers working out of Romania.

Also, I have tried to discover the Romanian authors' preoccupations related to the study of managers (mostly of sociologists and psychologists). Neculau (2007) analyzes the leadership along with two other concepts: power and authority; he treats style problems in the behaviour of the leader. Preda (2006) enumerates the differences between managers and leaders in regard to the behaviour in the organization (for example, the attitude towards change, attitude towards risk or towards subordinates). In 2007, as Professor Miclea states in the preface to the book of the psychologist Sebastian Pintea there appears "the first scientific work rigorously elaborated in Romania, dedicated to the psychology of entrepreneurial behaviour".

Pintea (2007, pp. 5-31) describes the two big explicative theories of entrepreneurship: the theory of features and the social learning theory. The theory of features claims that "entrepreneurs have certain built-in qualities that make them act as an entrepreneur. The personality features specific to entrepreneurs are, as the supporters of this theory claim, the cause of entrepreneurial behaviour". Of all these features I mention: the need of self-success, the internal locus of control, a drive into assuming risk, the toleration of ambiguities, a need of autonomy, proactive behaviour. The theory of social learning contours the social origins of entrepreneurial behaviour. Pintea realized prospective studies that "approach entrepreneurship through the lens of individuals who never held the position of entrepreneur (who never exercises this role) in the moment of the research".

What I have set to achieve was the realization of retrospective studies that "approach entrepreneurship through the lens of individuals that already hold the position (have already exercised this role for a while) in the moment of the research conduction" (Pintea, 2007, p. 26).

I will enumerate, shortly, some conclusions that I have reached as a result of the qualitative research (it was mentioned in the *Introduction* section of this article). They are theoretical propositions that I reached inductively through the analysis and interpretation of interviews that I also had mentioned in the beginning of the article. Life circumstances that contribute to the development of people as managers are as follows: they live in an authoritarian familial environment; they are assigned responsibilities from an early age; they have contact from an early age with jobs practiced by parents, other relatives or acquaintances, jobs that they themselves try; they earn money from an early age and administrate it themselves; along life they have

a lot of jobs starting from ground and promoting steadily; they are acquainted to a lot of people but they can rely on very few; the others persecute, envy or admire them, and finally, they are rational in their relation to others.

The circumstances in which had lived the future Romanian managers and that made them become what they have become are no special circumstances. I think that lots of people that did not become a manager can identify their own life's circumstances in those enumerated in the previous paragraph. I think that what really gives specificity to future managers is the reaction they have to context or medium. It is about their response strategy to the medium which belongs to a scheme of personal development. We are not talking solely about previous interpretations of experiences as a source of personal development, but about immediate answers through actions that induce learning, personal development. In other words, studied subjects do not only interpret their life's circumstances and the response to them as generators of development through learning, but they act as a response to circumstances in a manner of growing the human, social and professional potential.

Managers self-identify themselves through an enumeration of general traits and characteristics of the relationship with others, through specific manager traits; they have a positive image of themselves and a high self-esteem, they have a strong and very well established individual identification, and a weak collective identification.

The discovery of Romanian manager's identity characteristics had the purpose to elaborate some instruments of managerial and managerial performance diagnosis and prognosis; as well, I have sought the elaboration of identity strategies in growing and developing the identity potential of the actual and future managers.

What I have tried to bring as a novelty in the project I had already talked about was the study of Romanian managers from their identity point of view; then, the qualitative study of their identity characteristics – through in-depth interviews and the grounded of a theory having at the base “the sensitizing concept” of identity; lastly, the explanation of managerial performance through aspects of self-identity. I have tried to explain managerial performance through identity conditionings (I have stated that past personal experiences of the manager have influenced him to become a manager, or influenced him to become more or less performant in management). I also suggested the idea of personal development as a manager or a performant manager through the application of identity strategies.

## 2. The “Who Are You?” test

Returning to the *WAY* test, that makes the object of this article, it was a part of the questionnaire used in the data-collection process of the quantitative research (mentioned in the *Introduction* section of the article). I have tried, through this test to discover how the managers define themselves comparing with the non-managers; how they consider themselves, what qualities they assign themselves. Self-identity or self-identification (that the *WAY* test reveals) it's a part of the self that shows the way the

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individual thinks he/she is. It is shown by he's or she's own definitions of the self and refers to the aspects of both personal and social identity.

In the following I will describe briefly, the important terms used: identification, the *WAY* test, managers, and managerial performance.

In sociology, identification is a process of classification; of placing ourselves in socially built categories (*see* Marshall, 2003, p. 276). According to professor Ilut (1999), individual identifications can be interpersonal (political, civic, religious, artistic, sportive) or role-based (the appropriation and the practice of the formal and informal specific behaviour requested to a person that occupies a certain position in the social sphere). The most important consequence of the identification process is suggestively described by Jenkins (1996: 124): the self identification of an individual makes him/her predictable; as a consequence, others can predict his/her behaviour and they know what to expect from him/her. Therefore, the others around him/her will behave correspondently, they will become predictable as well, and the subject will be able to imagine their position in regard to him/her.

The 20-questions test or the *W-A-Y* test (Who Are You?) is probably the mostly used instrument of stocktaking the identity dimensions. In this test, the subjects are requested to answer in 20 different words, expressions or statements the question "who are you?". Zurcher (*apud* Ilut, 2001, p. 112), in 1977 classified the answers into four categories after applying the test to students in American colleges:

- a. "The identification with exterior physic attributes: I am blonde;
- b. The identification with social statuses/roles: student, catholic, married;
- c. Answers that describe moods and behaviours independent of social statuses/roles: I like classic music, I am an optimist, I get easily angry;
- d. General answers that bring no information about the individual: I am a human being, I am a bit in the Universe".

The obtained results confirmed the hypothesis that in contrast to the past decades traits referring to the intimate, spontaneous, impulsive (type "c" answers) self are more frequently invoked than the traits referring to the institutional (type "b" answers) self.

Ilut (2001) also applied the test on two batches of socio-humanist Romanian students (90 each) with an interval of 15 years. The answer proportions are showed in table below.

*Table 1*  
**Mutable self at Romanian students**

Answer type	1982	1997
a	4%	25%
b	18%	25%
c	32%	34%
d	46%	16%

**Source:** Iluț, 2001, p. 112.

The researchers' observations after studying the results are the following: "In comparison with American students, we can notice at Romanian students that even though type "c" answers are more frequent than type "b" and even a growth has been produced, in time, of type "c" – identification with interior moods – answers the percentage is still low; in exchange, grew considerably from 1982 (18%) to 1997 (25%) the number of type "b" answers – identifications with social statuses (after 1989 the differentiation in the social field is more powerful resented)" (Ilut, 2001, p. 113). The author also appreciate that "the thesis of the mutable self and of multiple identities relating to the socio-cultural context change formed after 1989 is supported by the fundamental mutations in the type "a" answer percentage (25%) and type "d" (16%) of 1997, in contrast to that of 1982 ("a" – 4% and "d" – 46%)". The researcher explain the findings this way: "The totalitarian regime suffocated the individuals, it tried to uniform them from multiple aspects, which resulted in the situation in which the individual avoided any identification with physical, exterior, but differentiating traits (type "a" answers); the strategy applied consciously, or not, appeared to be the avoiding of particular identities, the refuge in a space of "total anonymous" of "human being" or "part of the universe" – i.e. type "d" answers" (Ilut, 2001, p. 113).

In 1968 Gordon (*apud* Lorenzi-Cioldi & Doise, 1996: 56) applied the "Who are you?" test on 156 students. The most frequent answers referred to age (82%) and sex (74%). The mentioned author differentiated more answer categories placing them on a continuum – from a social point to a personal one of identity: "Individual belongings acquired by birth (gender, race, nationality, religious affiliation); family roles (father, brother, etc), political and professional affiliations; abstract and existential identifications, and ideological convictions; interests and activities; personality characteristics including moral values, autonomy, the perception of personal unity and individual competences". Gordon shows that "based on the social insertions, variations appear in the usage of different self-definition categories. For example, women mention more often the category of gender than men do, black mention their race category more than whites do, and Jews their religious affiliation. The affiliation to a minority or a dominant class generates in individuals a more acute sense of category (or categories), that puts them in either a minority or dominant class".

Therefore, the *WAY* test "is a typical example of approaching such sensitive and complex themes as the self and the identity, with relatively precise instruments that are at the crossroad of qualitative and quantitative methods" (Ilut, 1999). The novelty I wanted to bring was the subjects I used in the mentioned test: the managers.

Regarding the managers, I have defined them as persons that hold a leading position. I have considered that someone holds a leading position if she/he has at least three subordinates. The leading position was grouped in four categories: team leaders (persons that have a small number of people in subordination, they are responsible of their performance and have as well some bosses), institutional, organization or business administrators (that are responsible of institution's or business' performance and have a single boss – the manager of the institution or the owner of the business)



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and the administrators of independent institutions or organizations or of personal businesses (they do not have any bosses).

According to the businesses the responders could have, I have grouped them based on the following: small business (up to 10 employees and a turnover up to €500,000 per year), medium businesses (up to 50 employees and a turnover – bigger than €500,000 – up to 5 million Euros per year) and a large business (over 50 employees and a turnover of more than 5 million Euros per year).

I have described management performance as the holding of an important leadership position (with many employees in subordination, with bigger and more important responsibilities, in businesses with big turnovers).

### **3. The applied research methodology**

In the following I will describe the way I have applied the *WAY* test. It was a part of a more complex questionnaire that tried the identification of responders' identity aspects. The total number of those that have completed the test was 184. I will make a few considerations related to the sampling process.

The population my research referred to is the total active population in Romania (persons that are legally employed in Romania in December 2008). I have not projected a research with a representative sampling on a national scale. Therefore the sampling is not probabilistic and the results are impossible to be generalized on the entire level of the research universe; the technique used was "the snowball": through family, friends, colleagues or students I have made my way to people in leadership positions, which afterwards facilitated my way to other people in leadership positions – colleagues, bosses, business partners. I have presented broadly the procedure of selecting the people in leadership positions because they were the ones the hardest to find.

I have used, thus, the non-probabilistic sampling (theoretical or aim-based, as it is also called). I have tried the interrogation of subjects that would permit comparisons of identity characteristics on categories of responders. That is why I have selected persons that never held before leadership positions, persons that have held before once or more times leadership positions but hold them no more, and persons that still hold leadership positions. I have selected more persons with leadership position than without in order to realize analysis operations on subpopulations with leadership positions (team leaders, department managers, institutional administrators).

The test was completed by 53 persons that never held a leadership position, 32 persons that held once but in the moment of interrogation did not hold a leadership position, and 99 persons that held a leadership position in the moment of interrogation. Out of those holding a position, 25 were team leaders, 31 were department managers, 19 were administrators of dependent institutions or organizations or of somebody else's businesses and 24 administrators of independent institutions or organizations or of their own businesses. The test was completed by 121 women and 63 men; 57 of these worked in the public domain, 116 in the private domain and 11 in non-profit organizations. The

obtained data was inventoried in an NVivo-type data-base. This software is conceived for the organization and processing of qualitative data. The data obtained were words and statements post-coded in the four already specified and described categories (*see* the part dedicated to the presentation of the *WAY* test). Thus I have processed the obtained data with the help of qualitative analysis methods and techniques.

I have used the variable-oriented data analysis strategy (*see* the analysis strategies in Huberman and Miles, 1998). More exactly, I have selected from each case (subject) the words and statements that referred to the same theme (variable) and I have treated them in the analysis as a whole, taking into consideration the different socio-demographic categories that stood at the base of the comparisons. The text-working strategy was the coding of the material with the purpose of creating categories and developing theories (*see* text-working strategy in Flick, 1998).

I have applied the open coding (the first procedure of the theoretical coding – *see* Strauss and Corbin, 1990) of the obtained material grouping the text-extracted codes in categories. I have obtained, therefore, an inventory of 330 codes (i.e. identification modalities: ambitious, honest, brave, etc.). There resulted, as well, 26 categories, some even having subcategories. I have therefore realized an axial coding comprising four axial categories: physical traits, social statuses and roles, moods and behaviours, and abstract things. This way, the compact data, represented in the shape of a graph, took the shape of a tree. For example, the axial category – identification with statuses and roles – had its subcategories: the gender category, family statuses, interactional statuses, professional statuses, religious statuses, and finally, society statuses. Subsequently, some of these subcategories had their own subcategories. For example, family statuses: family roles and the marital status; or professional statuses: position and occupation. And under each of these subcategories one could find the codes (the most reproducing exactly the words of the responders). The central category or the nucleus category to which I linked (through selective coding) all the axial categories with their subcategories and codes was Identification.

As a result of applying the theoretical coding I have tried the development of theoretical statements through systematic comparisons between the received data on different categories of subjects; thus, I have worked with matrices on data sets in order to compare the different groups. The data sets realized were based on attributes (disposed in matrix lines, in columns being the identification categories): sex (masculine/feminine), status (manager/non-manager), manager type (small: team leader, department manager, small or medium entrepreneur/big: top manager, top entrepreneur), working place (state-owned/private sector), age span (youngsters – 26-39/mature – 40-49/seniors – 50-69).

#### 4. The research results

I will enumerate henceforth the conclusions I have reached at the end of the analysis and data interpretation. So, how the subjects of my research identify themselves?

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The most identifications (indifferent of sex, age or occupation) have been mood and behaviour-related. The other types are not only fewer, but also less diverse. In order to compare them, I have counted how many times the identification elements have appeared in the four classes (at all 184 subjects): physical traits – 122 times at 85 subjects (46% of the total); statuses and roles – 335 times at 139 subjects (75% of the total), moods and behaviours – 1,406 times at 177 subjects (96% of the total) and abstractions – 76 times at 63 subjects (34% of the total). I will introduce the data in a table for a better view of the figures.

Table 2

**The appearance frequency of the identification classes  
on the investigated population**

Identification Class	The absolute frequency of appearance	The number of subjects it appears	The percent of subjects it appears
Physical traits	122	85	46%
Statuses and roles	335	139	75%
Moods and behaviours	1406	177	96%
Abstractions	76	63	34%

The distribution rate of the four types (*see* Table 3) on the total number of responders shows as it follows (based on the number of subjects that have identified through the four types of categories): physical traits 18%, statuses and roles 30%, moods and behaviours 38%, abstractions 14%. These figures show how many subjects identified them with at least one element of a certain class. But, the frequency rate of the answers on the investigated population looks like this (based on the number of answers in each category): physical traits 6%, statuses and roles 17%, moods and behaviours 73%, abstractions 4%. The latter figures show (in percents) how many elements from each category have been used by respondents.

Table 3

**The percentage rate of the four answer types**

Identification class	Function of how many subjects identified through this category	Function of the answer numbers in each category
Physical traits	18%	6%
Statuses and roles	30%	17%
Moods and behaviours	38%	73%
Abstractions	14%	4%

According to this table, the majority define themselves through moods and behaviours; there is specific information that they release about the way they are, act and react; as well, temperamental characteristics or related to social interaction; it is not vague, ambiguous information; it is not general information or empty words; it is

personal information, traits that individualize, that make people stand out, that satisfy the need of uniqueness; they are not collective identifications or affiliations.

I will make a detailed analysis of each category. Given the unrepresentative character of the sample, the reached conclusions have a more hypothetical value, they are noticed tendencies identified with the occasion of data-processing.

Regarding the identification through physical traits, females more often than men identify through them (more exactly women that are not managers). Females refer, in order to identify themselves to their youth, beauty, and elegance or simply to their pleasant presence. Men just remind of their height, colour of their eyes or hair. The physical trait the most mentioned by subjects is the colour of the hair (it appeared in 29% of the cases). Non-managers identify themselves more than managers, through physical traits (46 out of 85 non-managers and only 39 out of 99 managers).

Related to the identification through statuses and social roles, I have noted the following: subjects define themselves through the category of sex; through family statuses: marital status, number of children, and family role – husband/wife, brother/sister, uncle/aunt, or nephew/niece; also through interactional statuses – friend, colleague, adult/child (in the way that one declares himself child even if he is over 18); through professional statuses – profession or occupations; through religious statuses – atheists or Christians of diverse denominations, and through social statuses – Romanians, citizens, inhabitants of certain cities or born in certain cities. The most frequent identifications are the ones with a professional status, then with the role of a parent (mostly women: 38 out of 121, than men: 9 out of 63; the most managers: 34 out of 99, than non-managers: 13 out of 85) or with the role of a spouse and gender (mostly women: 30 out of 121, than men: 11 out of 63; the most: institution or business managers: 12 – out of whom 10 women – out of 43, than the team leaders and department managers: 9 – out of whom 6 women – out of 56).

Managers, more than non-managers, identify themselves through statuses and roles (80 managers out of 99 and only 59 non-managers out of 85). The more important the position held, the more the one in discussion defines himself as a leader or manager. The ones that work in the private sector identify themselves more through the occupied position: 30 out of 116, than those who work for the state: 8 out of 57). Through statuses and roles, mostly define themselves the managers: 56 out of 99, than non-managers: only 31 of 85; and the most, women: 63 out of 121, than men: 26 out of 63. Through their children define themselves managers: 14 out of 99, then non-managers: 4 out of 85. Through the family role identify themselves mostly women: 57 out of 121, then men: 19 out of 63; and the most, the managers: 48 out of 99, then non-managers: 29 out of 85; these are mostly managers holding less important positions: 29 out of 56, than highly important managers: 17 out of 43. Through interactional statuses identify themselves mostly women: 32 out of 121, than men: 9 out of 63; the most, the “small” bosses: 17 out of 56, than “big” bosses: 4 out of 43.

Regarding the identification through moods and behaviours, I have noted the following: subjects identify themselves through physical abilities and intellectual abilities, through temperamental characteristics, through their way of being, of action

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and reaction, through behaviours, feelings, the evaluation of the self and their current status (health, stress, etc.), through values, wishes and expectations. The most frequent identifications are those through the way of being, of action and reaction (mostly women: 111 out of 121, than men: 47 out of 63), with behaviours and temperamental characteristics (mostly women: 81 out of 121, than men: 30 out of 63), and the current status (each of the mentioned identifications have been present to at least 60% of the total responders). More exactly, the most references are to inter-relationships, sentimental statuses and leisure characteristics.

Women (27 out of 121), more than men (6 out of 63), define themselves through activism (agitated, dynamic, active). “Small” bosses (20 out of 56), more than “big” bosses (7 out of 43), define them as optimists, cheerful, humour-sensitive. Women (98 out of 121), more than men (37 out of 63), “small” bosses (45 out of 56), more than “big” bosses (23 out of 43), the ones that work in the state sector (47 out of 57), more than those that work in the private sector (80 out of 116) define themselves through inter-relationship characteristics and values. Women (57 out of 121), more than men (16 out of 63) remind their defects when self-defining (the mostly referred defect is stubbornness); men often define themselves as indolent, arrogant, selfish and vain; women define themselves as impulsive, impatient, angry, etc.; even “small” bosses (23 out of 56) remind their defects more than “big” bosses (9 out of 43).

As it regards the identification through abstract things, that bring no concrete information about the subjects, I have noticed two categories of abstractions: *attributes* – common, insipid, normal, familiar, simple or different and *qualities* – of a being, soul, individual, human, and person. The most frequent self-definitions are the qualities as a human, then of being and soul. It could be mentioned a tendency of the “big” bosses towards a self-definition through abstract qualities: 13 out of 43, comparing to the “small” bosses: 10 out of 56.

I have tried a comparison between managers and non-managers from the view point of the way they identify. I have made an inventory of the noticed tendencies: managers, in contrast to non-managers, define themselves through statuses and roles (professional and familial) and less through physical traits; managers, in contrast to non-managers, define themselves through their status in the family and through their children (maybe it is because questioned managers, more probably than non-managers, are at the age where they have children, and the family roles are more numerous); managers, in contrast to non-managers, define themselves through behaviours (leisure, learning – they are curious, they learn, they do not waste time – or pro-social, they are altruists, they give, they help) and less through temperamental characteristics; managers, in contrast to non-managers, define themselves less through defects (managers declare themselves indolent and impulsive, while non-managers mostly stubborn, bad, impatient, nervous, selfish and naïve); managers, in contrast to non-managers, define themselves through the way they handle tasks (managers declare themselves serious, tidy and consider that they work well in team, while non-managers declare themselves efficient, hardworking and active).

Therefore, what appears to be specific to the studied managers is the fact that they define themselves through their profession or occupation, through the place held in the family, through what they do and the way they handle tasks; what appears to be specific to the studied non-managers is the fact that they define themselves more through physical traits, temperamental characteristics or defects. So managers define themselves through what they are and what they do, and all these are qualities and positively socially valorised.

It appears that ambition is not a characteristic trait solely of managers (at least at a declarative level both they and non-managers define themselves through this trait). As well, modesty characterizes more the non-managers; managers are more boisterous with their achievements. The elements that reveal a high self-esteem are more present at managers; they see themselves as realized, as they have achieved their life, satisfied, happy and they do not mention many defects (the ones mentioned are not that serious), they define themselves through intellectual abilities. It appears that neither managers nor non-managers identify themselves through affiliations to groups (collective identity is weakly represented in both studied categories); therefore, the domination of the individual identity in self economy seems not to be characteristic to managers.

Also, I have tried a comparison between types of managers (I have grouped them in “small” bosses – the ones leading teams or departments, and “big” bosses – the ones managing institutions, organizations or businesses) from the view point of their identification. I have made an inventory of the noticed tendencies: “small” bosses, in contrast to “big” bosses define themselves more through familial statuses (more exactly through familial roles: husband/wife or parent) and through interactional statuses (friend/colleague), and “big” bosses, in contrast to “small” bosses define themselves through gender statuses (mostly women that are “big” bosses); “small” bosses, in contrast to “big” bosses identify themselves more through profession or occupation and less through the occupied function in the hierarchy; “small” bosses define themselves more through behaviours and current status (health, stress and affective moods: content or discontent, loved or in love), while “big” bosses declare themselves optimists, happy and define themselves more through inter-relationships (they are sociable, communicative, devoted, loyal and sincere); “small” bosses define themselves more than “big” bosses through defects (indolent, selfish, naïve, vain).

Therefore, what appears to be specific to managers that hold a less important function is the fact that they identify through the roles that they have in their family or in the daily relations, through their profession or occupation, through the affective status, through inter-relationship characteristics, through optimism, but also through some defects; what appears to be specific to managers that hold an important position is the gender identification (mostly women), the occupied position in the hierarchy, values and beliefs, and future-reporting.

## 5. Conclusions

In conclusion, there are significant differences between the ways managers identify themselves in contrast to non-managers, between the ways performant managers identify themselves in contrast to the less-performant ones. Some problems, of course, arise: are the self-identification characteristics determined by the leading position or are they the factor that predisposes the individual to have a leading position? In what way are self-identification modalities flexible, and in what way one can change them? I have tried to answer these questions through the statistic analysis of the data collected by the questionnaire (using statistic coefficients, like Eta coefficient) or through the qualitative research that allowed me to describe the circumstances in which the inventoried identity aspects have appeared and developed.

Through this article I wanted to signal that the study of manager's identity is an interesting domain, with a great descriptive and explicative potential of the managerial behaviour and managerial performance. I wanted to show that by applying a simple test of responder's self-identity description, one can produce results that can be taken into consideration as a new knowledge, as a starting point in future study approaches.

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